

# Sixth Form Handbook

## 2026



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_



**Bacon's College Sixth Form**  
The best in everyone™  
Part of United Learning

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# Sixth Form Overview

## Welcome

Year 12, welcome to Bacon’s Sixth Form and Year 13, welcome back!

September is always a good time for a fresh start. That is even more true this year with all the changes we have introduced. I have highlighted some of these on the next page, so do have a read of them.

This handbook includes all the key information you need for life in Sixth Form, including policies, procedures, outlines of the school day and week and some key things for you to be aware of.

A wise man once said that “*you get out what you put in*”. We want you to put your all into Bacon’s this academic year. Not only in the classroom and in your study periods, but also by getting stuck into super and extra-curricular activities. There is so much for you to get involved in as you grow into this year and lead the College through the upcoming year.

We are so looking forward to working with you to fulfil your potential and reach your goals.

Mr Foley and Mr Wilson

## Staff Sixth Form Leadership Team

<p><b>Mr J Foley</b>  Assistant Principal  Head of Sixth Form.  Teacher of Science.  <a href="mailto:j.foley@baconcollege.co.uk">j.foley@baconcollege.co.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Mr R Wilson.</b>  Deputy Head of Sixth Form.  Teacher of Philosophy.  <a href="mailto:r.Wilson@baconcollege.co.uk">r.Wilson@baconcollege.co.uk</a></p>
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## Application Advisor team

<p><b>Ms N Kwafo</b>  Application Advisor  Teacher of Economics</p>	<p><b>Ms C Newton</b>  Application Advisor  Curriculum Leader of History</p>
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## Student Sixth Form Leadership Team

<p>Head student Mieke</p>	<p>Head Student Danh</p>
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<p>Deputy Head Student Afnan</p>	<p>Deputy Head Student Safire</p>	<p>Deputy Head Student Tahera</p>
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Nathaniel	Ruby	Gracie-Bella	Mariam
Mustafa	Yousef	Samia	Ruby

## Roles and Responsibilities

### ***A Brief Overview***

<b>Mr J Foley</b> Head of Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sixth Form Vision and Values</li><li>• Academic Progress</li><li>• Standards and Expectations (including conduct and dress)</li><li>• Assemblies and Best in Everyone lessons</li><li>• Post-18 Pathways and UCAS</li><li>• Recruitment and Marketing</li><li>• Curriculum</li><li>• Teaching and Learning</li><li>• Achievement and Extensions</li></ul>
<b>Mr R Wilson</b> Deputy Head of Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sixth Form Vision and Values</li><li>• Academic Progress</li><li>• Assemblies</li><li>• Standards and Expectations (including conduct and dress)</li><li>• Extra and Super Curricular Offerings</li><li>• Curriculum</li><li>• Teaching and Learning</li><li>• Achievement and Extensions</li></ul>
<b>Progress and Welfare officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance and Punctuality</li><li>• Academic Progress and Support</li><li>• Pastoral Care and Wellbeing</li><li>• Behaviour, Conduct and Standards</li><li>• Study Area Supervision and Learning Environment</li><li>• Sixth Form Presence and Daily Operations</li><li>• Communication, Liaison and Primary Parent/Carer Contact</li></ul>
<b>Mentors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One-to-one support and discussions</li><li>• Academic guidance</li><li>• Progress monitoring</li><li>• Personalised support</li><li>• Goal setting</li></ul>
<b>Application Advisors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application support, review and improvement</li><li>• University guidance</li><li>• Apprenticeship support</li><li>• Career planning</li><li>• Post-16 pathways and options</li></ul>
<b>Student Sixth Form Leadership Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The team are the role models for the school, embodying the spirit of Bacon's</li><li>• Be the voice of the Sixth Form</li><li>• Model the high expectations of dress, conduct and attitudes</li><li>• Fundraise and organise Sixth Form events (social and charity)</li></ul>

# The Sixth Form Day

## Sixth Form Start times

	<b>Sixth Form</b>
<b>Monday</b>	8.25 start for Whole College Assembly / other activities if WCA is not running
<b>Tuesday</b>	8.55 registering unless in intervention group
<b>Wednesday</b>	8.55 registering unless in intervention group
<b>Thursday</b>	8.55 registering unless in intervention group
<b>Friday</b>	8.25 start for assembly / activities

## Support groups and Structure of the College Day for 6<sup>th</sup> formers

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>From 8.00</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>
<b>From 8.25</b>	<b>Assembly</b>	<b>Focus Improvement Group</b>	<b>Targeted Support group</b>	<b>Focus Improvement Group</b>	<b>Assembly</b>
<b>1,2</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>
<b>3,4</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>
<b>5,6</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Focus Improvement Group</b>	<b>Lesson/Study</b>	<b>Targeted Support group</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Intensive Support Group</b>	<b>Targeted Support group</b>	<b>Targeted Support group</b>	<b>Intensive Support Group</b>	<b>Intensive Support Group</b>
<b>Until 4.30</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>	<b>Critical Support group</b>

Students will be placed in to focus and intervention groups for a variety of reasons, these are outlined below. Should students be working well, with good attendance and performance they will not be required in school on any of the highlighted sections. The majority of students will have four study periods in school a week with 6 periods per subject they are studying.

Criteria for being in intervention and focus groups

All decisions made on these groups are done so at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Head of Sixth Form. Their decisions are final.

In general students will be moved in to the groups identified if they meet any of the following criteria. Students in a higher level of support will automatically be included in the lower level of support, e.g. a student in the Intensive Support Group for attendance of 89% would also be placed in to the Focus Improvement Group and The Targeted Support Group.

#### **Things to move students into the Focus Improvement Group:**

- Attendance below 95%
- More than 1 homework detention in a week
- More than 1 late in a week
- Post report attitudinal average of more than 2 in independent learning

#### **Straight into the Targeted Support Group**

- Coursework non completion - e.g. missing a coursework deadline/quality
- Attendance below 92%
- More than 2 homework detention in a week
- More than 2 late in a week

#### **Straight into the Intensive Support Group**

- Coursework non completion for more than 1 week - e.g. missing a coursework deadline/quality and not catching up
- Attendance below 90%
- More than 3 homework detentions in a week or 4 in two weeks
- More than 3 lates in a week or 4 in two weeks
- Post report attitudinal average of more than 2, across any category (not including Independent work)

#### **Critical Support Group - 8am start, 16.30 finish**

- Attendance below 85%
- More than 2 weeks without coursework being completed - e.g. missing a coursework deadline/quality and not catching up
- Late percentage above 10%
- Post report attitudinal average of more than 2.5, across any category (not including Independent work)

# Sixth Form Expectations

## Lesson Expectations

### Sixth Form Lesson Routines

#### Start of lessons

- Students enter immediately on arrival and start the *Do Now*
- Students should arrive with the correct dress
- Students should arrive promptly
- All equipment should be on the desk and bags under the desk

#### During lessons

- Students should willingly and actively participate in all lessons
- All students should work at an appropriate pace
- All students should make progress every lesson
- All resources and notes should be recorded either in an exercise book or folder

#### End of lessons

- Teachers and students should ensure the classroom is left tidy

#### Exercise books/folders

- Students should have all prior work including PPE papers organised and available for all lessons
- Development of the content following the subject specification or scheme of work
- Outline of course content and assessment e.g. appropriate pages from specification
- Evidence of regular self/peer marking in green pen
- Evidence of regular teacher marking including exam style tasks
- Notes should be neatly recorded including the date

## Study Area Expectations

When you do not have a timetabled lesson, you will have a study period.

This time is to be spent in quiet study, completing either homework, extension tasks, wider reading, revision or UCAS related activities.

During lesson time, the study area is a place of quiet focus.

During break times and lunch times, this area may be used for rest and relaxation.

**Reminder:** Students are not permitted to use the toilet in lesson times unless they have a toilet pass. Please ensure you use the toilet during break and lunch.

## E-mail Expectations

Please ensure that all emails sent are formal and a good reflection of you as a student at Bacon's College.

This includes:

- Addressing the person you are emailing at the beginning (Dear Sir/Madam, Dear *Name*, Dear both, Dear all, )
- Accurate spelling and grammar
- You have signed off appropriately (Many thanks, Thanks, Best wishes, Kind regards, Yours sincerely)
- All emails must be polite and not rude or demanding

## Student Organisation

**Students must bring their folder/book, and all equipment/resources to EVERY lesson their teacher requires them to.**

### Standard student equipment required for all lessons

- Black, blue, red and green pens
- Highlighters
- Ruler
- Pencils
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Prior work and/or notes

### Other student equipment that may be required for some subjects

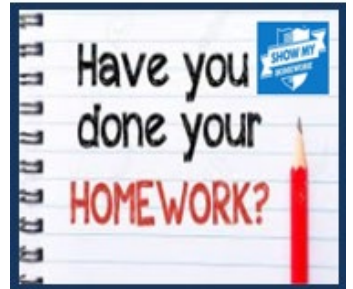
- Folders
- Dividers

- Exercise books
- Scientific Calculator
- College PE Kit
- Lab equipment
- Other as specified by departments

**Any equipment or resources provided by subjects must be kept in good condition and brought to all lessons (or as instructed by departments)**

## Homework

**satchel:one**



- All students will complete a minimum of **5 hours** homework **per subject per week**
- All homework should be set on **Show My Homework**
- Homework should either be teacher marked or quality assured
- If homework is **not completed** students will be allocated a **detention** after school and will likely end up in one of the support groups mentioned above
- All Sixth Form detentions will be in the canteen with the whole school detentions

## Sixth Form Dress Code

Sixth Form students are the role models of the college therefore we expect **smart casual dress** at all times.

- Students are expected to wear smart casual clothing
- Sixth Form ID must be worn around the neck the whole-time students are in school
- Smart trousers/skirt/chinos - suitable for smart casual dress. Trousers should be full length. Shorts must not be worn. Skirts should not be excessively short.
- Smart top - Must cover shoulders and midriff. Polo shirts or shirts are acceptable. T-shirts are not.
- Plain fine knit jumpers or cardigans may be worn
- Smart casual shoes - suitable for smart casual dress, work orientated and comfortable. No trainers, sliders, converse style shoes, or flip flops
- Coats must not be worn outside of the sixth form area
- The Head of Sixth Form's judgement will be final

- No headwear (other than for religious purposes)
- No offensive slogans or logos on clothing
- No jeans, denim or torn/ripped/scruffy/too tight/low cut trousers
- No combat trousers, cut-offs or shorts (even with tights or leggings)
- No strappy tops or vests
- No exposing bare midriff, excessively short skirts, or low cut tops
- No underwear should be visible
- No flip flops, 'sliders', trainers or converse style shoes
- No accessories such as chains or spikes
- No facial piercings are allowed except one nose piercing and earrings
- **No phones, headphones, or ear buds** to be seen anywhere outside of the sixth form area

# Sixth Form Policies and Procedures

## Sixth Form Behaviour Policy

All students are expected to adhere to the *whole school behaviour policy*. As members of the Sixth Form, students will be expected to be ambassadors of the College and role models to younger students.

### **Mobile Phones and Headphones**

Students are not to have mobile phones or headphones visible or making noise anywhere on the school grounds outside of the common room.

Additionally, mobile phones/headphones will be *confiscated* and handed into a member of the Sixth Form team. The mobile phones/headphones will be returned to the student at the end of their detention. If a student is seen or heard in possession of mobile phones/headphones outside of the designated permitted area TWICE in one week, then parents/guardians will be required to collect these items.

### **Exclusions**

There are certain behaviours we regard as 'Red Lines' that will not be tolerated. A student is likely to receive an exclusion from school for:

- Possession of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, fireworks and/or offensive weapons
- Theft
- Failure to attend Isolation Room
- Discriminatory language/behaviour/abuse
- Bullying (physical, verbal, cyber) towards a peer or member of staff

**All sanctions are at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form**

## Student Absence Procedure

- Students should be in school every day
- Teachers must take registers within the first 5 minutes of a lesson (only required once during a double)
- Medical appointments should be made outside of the school day wherever possible
- Planned absences must be formally requested by completing a *Planned Absence Request Form*. Students should submit their requests to the Sixth Form team. The Head of Sixth Form will give the final authorisation if approved
- Students must give at least at least 72 hours notice prior to an appointment when possible
- If a student is unavoidably delayed or prevented from attending a lesson, he or she must contact the College by telephone and leave a message with the school office.
- Truancy from a lesson will result in an isolation referral
- If the planned absence is for a University Open Day, students must provide evidence of the visit.
- Students are allowed to miss school to visit a **maximum of three University Open Days** each year. This does not include interview days.

## Withdrawal from a Subject / Amendment of Course Procedures

- Students must attend all lessons in their timetabled subjects until the formal withdrawal / course amendment process has been completed
- Student must complete the appropriate form which must then be signed and authorised by a parent/carer and relevant CL(s)
- *This process is only complete once the Heads of Sixth Form have authorised the request*
- Once officially authorised, a student's timetable will be updated to reflect this change and will be removed from / added to the relevant register

## Exam entries

- Students will in normal circumstances be entered for exams in all subjects they are studying
- In exceptional circumstances students may either not be entered for exams or be withdrawn. These could include:
  - Poor attendance, if a students attendance is either poor throughout the year or drops significantly prior to exams so as to impact the school's ability to prepare them for their exams
  - To any specific subject, or school in general.
  - Failure to complete homework regularly to an acceptable standard
  - Failure to complete coursework to an acceptable standard
  -
- If an entry has already been made and the school chooses not to withdraw the entry, we retain the right to charge students for that entry, and withhold the exam certificates until that payment has been received.

# Student Experience and Entitlement

## Best in Everyone lessons

### 1. Mentoring & Personal Development

#### What we cover:

- Understanding sixth form expectations, routines and policies
- Preparing for mentor meetings
- Reflecting on strengths, challenges and targets
- Goal setting linked to aspirations
- Developing interview-style communication skills

#### Why it matters:

- Gives students meaningful 1:1 support
- Helps them set and track personal goals
- Ensures students feel known, supported and accountable
- Builds self-awareness and reflective habits crucial for academic growth

### 2. Study Skills & Academic Readiness

#### What we cover:

- Creating and reviewing study timetables
- Building effective habits and routines (the “three R’s”)
- Retrieval practice and test-question routines
- Revision strategies, exam planning and coping during exam periods
- JSTOR and academic research skills

#### Why it matters:

- Directly improves academic performance by teaching students **how to learn**, not just *what* to learn
- Builds independence and resilience
- Prepares students for A-Level assessment and university-level study
- Reduces stress by helping students manage time and workload effectively

### 3. Mindset & Motivation (VESPA)

#### What we cover:

- Vision setting and long-term aspirations
- Everyday motivation
- Understanding how mindset influences effort and outcomes
- Learning from mistakes using LFM sheets

#### Why it matters:

- VESPA is a proven framework used by high-performing sixth forms nationally.
- We choose those strategies that will have the biggest impact on our students and use these

- It equips students with the cognitive and behavioural tools needed for success
- Fosters long-term motivation, discipline and purpose

## 4. PSHE, Wellbeing & Life Skills

### What we cover:

- Finance, taxes and budgeting
- Digital footprint and responsible social media use
- Consent and respectful relationships
- RSE refresh and Q&A
- Mental health, stress and coping strategies

### Why it matters:

- Ensures statutory safeguarding and PSHE requirements
- Gives students essential knowledge for adult life
- Promotes safe behaviour, healthy relationships and wellbeing
- Supports students holistically, not just academically

## 5. Enrichment, RS & Citizenship

### What we cover:

- Public speaking workshops
- Social deduction and teamwork activities
- Ethical and philosophical RS discussions
- Employability talks (e.g., Veran Performance)

### Why it matters:

- Develops confidence, communication and leadership
- Builds cultural, ethical and digital awareness
- Strengthens teamwork, problem-solving and creativity
- Helps students gain insights into careers and the wider world

# Pastoral Support

## Sixth Form Progress and Welfare Officer

The Sixth Form Progress & Welfare Officer (PWO) is a key part of the pastoral team. They work every day to help ensure that all Sixth Form students feel safe, supported, organised, and able to achieve their best.

The PWO works closely with the Heads of Sixth Form, mentors, tutors, teachers, parents/carers, and external agencies to make sure every student receives the right support at the right time.

## *How the Sixth Form Progress & Welfare Officer Supports Students*

### Attendance, Punctuality & Daily Support

The PWO helps students develop strong attendance habits and keeps track of who is in school each day. They:

- Check attendance daily and follow up on absences
- Make phone calls home when students are absent
- Speak with students who are arriving late or missing lessons
- Work with families to reduce unauthorised absence
- Support students who find attending school difficult

### Academic Progress & Keeping Students On Track

The PWO contributes to ensuring students make strong academic progress.

They:

- Work with the Sixth Form team to monitor student progress
- Support targeted interventions in the Study Area and during the school day
- Help maintain high expectations for organisation, equipment and deadlines
- Celebrate student successes (e.g. via Sixth Form Shout-Outs and reward systems)

### Wellbeing, Behaviour & Pastoral Support

The PWO plays a major role in supporting student wellbeing.

They:

- Are a key point of contact for any pastoral or welfare concern
- Support students experiencing difficulties inside or outside school
- Liaise with safeguarding leads, mentors, and external agencies when needed
- Help students meet behaviour expectations and resolve issues calmly and fairly, including issues that may arise in student teacher interactions.
- Provide guidance for students who need structured, ongoing pastoral support

### A Calm, Purposeful Study Environment

The PWO manages the Sixth Form Study Area to ensure it supports focused, independent learning.

They:

- Supervise the Study Area throughout the day
- Register students at the start of study periods
- Ensure the Study Area remains calm, silent, and productive
- Support students in developing strong study routines and independent learning habits

### Supporting the Wider Sixth Form Experience

The PWO contributes to making Sixth Form a well-organised and supportive environment.

They:

- Supervise the common room and other Sixth Form spaces
- Support events, trips, enrichment activities, and celebrations
- Help coordinate Year 12 transition, induction and Year 13 return
- Manage communications such as attendance messages, reminders and reward letters
- Assist with key Sixth Form occasions such as Welcome Services, Challenge Days, and Results Days

## *What This Means for Students*

Because the Sixth Form Progress & Welfare Officer is part of your support system, you can expect:

- A consistent adult available to support your wellbeing
- Quick follow-up if things aren't going to plan, so you don't fall behind
- A safe, calm and positive Sixth Form environment
- Clear expectations and help with organisation and routines
- A Sixth Form experience where pastoral care and academic support work together

The PWO helps ensure that every student is **supported, challenged, and equipped to succeed throughout their Sixth Form journey.**

## Sixth Form Mentoring Summary

### *Teacher Mentoring Sixth Form Students*

Our sixth formers describe themselves as having real connections with their teachers and respecting their subject knowledge, caring attitude and ability to support them. To build on this we want each sixth former to sit down with a dedicated mentor on a regular basis. We will aim for these mentors to be teachers who teach those students. Teachers will be given one mentee for every double lesson they teach

- The activities outlined in the following sections will be undertaken at different times during the year
- It is expected that teachers will meet with their mentees once every 3 weeks, with each meeting lasting approximately 15 minutes
- Students will be expected to prepare for these meetings, and that preparation will be introduced by the Sixth Form team in pastoral sessions.
- Structured points for discussion will be shared with Mentors prior to these meetings
  - Support will be available in the form of a dedicated mentor drop-in session with the sixth form team as well as one-to-one support on request.
- Any significant or more regular pastoral work will be done by the Sixth Form team, e.g. detention follow up, significant concerns about performance etc

### *Academic Mentoring:*

- **Workload and Homework Management:**
  - Help students manage their workload across different subjects, acknowledging varying demands.
- **Target Setting and Monitoring:**
  - Regularly track student progress against targets using CWA grades and predictions, including using tools like student subject analysis sheets that were completed for year 13 earlier this year, and will be completed for year 12 next year.
  - Discuss mock exam results and the steps needed to reach target grades.
- **Personalized Support and Intervention:**
  - Support students in the development of personalised revision plans, especially in the run-up to exams. And check that they are being done!
  - Ensure students have clear revision plans based on content coverage for each subject.

- Help students develop effective study skills and independent learning habits by checking plans that have been discussed in whole sixth form sessions.

#### *Personal Mentoring:*

- **Building Relationships and Trust:**
  - Foster strong, supportive relationships with their mentees.
  - Create a calm, positive, and enjoyable support environment where students feel supported and challenged.
  - Be approachable and available, dedicating specific time to students for meetings.
- **University (UCAS) and Careers Guidance:**
  - Provide follow-up on initial career interest discussions.
  - Support students in using tools like Unifrog and accessing relevant opportunities.
  - Facilitate university visits and engagement with programs like the UL Oxbridge programme.
  - Provide guidance on work experience.
  - Liaise with Application Advisors
- **Wellbeing and Pastoral Support:**
  - Be aware of students' overall wellbeing, discussing and supporting with the sixth form team

## Bacon's Service

### *What is it?*

Bacon's Service is a weekly commitment for every sixth form student to **contribute 30 minutes per week** to the wider school community.

Activities can be completed at any point in the week depending on the nature of the role. Examples include:

- Reading with younger students
- Tutoring year 11 (both high attainers and grade 4/5 students)
- Supporting clubs (science club, girls' football, homework club, etc.)
- Barrier duties
- Vent mentoring
- Library support
- Other extracurricular or pastoral support roles

Students record their choice and involvement through the provided form.

### *Why We Do It*

The purpose of Bacon's Service is to promote **education with character** by building a culture of contribution, connection, and leadership.

#### 1. Strengthening Whole-School Community

- Builds connection between sixth form students and younger years.
- Embeds positive role modelling across the school.
- Encourages older students to support whole-school development.

## 2. Developing Students Personally

- Provides structured chances to show leadership, reliability, and initiative.
- Builds confidence, communication skills, and resilience through real responsibilities.
- Gives reluctant or less-involved students a meaningful way to engage with school life.

## 3. Improving Outcomes

- Supports academic performance across the school (e.g., through tutoring).
- Encourages sixth formers to become more responsible, improving their own independence.
- Contributes to stronger retention from Year 11 into Year 12 by creating a more connected school experience.

# Learning Support

## Summary of learning from mistakes

### *Why we use a Learning From Mistakes strategy*

During the *Best in Everyone* students are explicitly taught **how and why** to analyse their mistakes as part of effective learning. The key message is that mistakes are a normal and valuable part of learning, not something to avoid or rush past. Rather than simply correcting work and moving on, students are taught to study their mistakes, categorise them, and identify clear next steps to avoid similar issues in the future.

Learning from mistakes sheets also form an important part of final stages of revision and the creation of subject exam summary sheets that can be created by each student for exam day revision review. Examples for a variety of subjects follow the posters at the end of this section.

### *A shared language*

In the Sixth Form we use a shared language around three types of mistakes (adapted from the *A-Level Mindset* book):

- **Active mistakes** – an incorrect process or approach is chosen
- **Slip-ups** – the correct process is chosen, but errors occur in execution
- **Blackouts** – required knowledge is missing or forgotten

Using this common terminology helps students to:

- better understand the purpose of post-assessment review
- feel more confident identifying and discussing their own mistakes
- develop more targeted and meaningful improvement strategies

### *Overall Sixth Form expectations with LFM*

All Sixth Form students are required to complete mistake analysis following assessments and reviewed work, and to retain these analysis sheets in the back of their exercise books (or electronically, where appropriate). This expectation applies across all subjects, including those that are largely or entirely coursework-based. Developing the habit of reflecting on errors, misconceptions, and gaps in understanding is an essential learning skill for all students, regardless of subject or assessment style. Students lead on this, with teachers providing encouragement, monitoring and challenging of standards.

- Completion of mistake analysis is the responsibility of the student. This should normally be completed outside of lesson time, unless teachers choose to build it into lessons to ensure high quality completion.

- Teachers are not expected to lead or complete the analysis for students, but should check that it is being completed and that it is to a good standard, challenging superficial or token responses where necessary.
- The process should be student-led, with teachers acting as a check and support rather than the driver.
- Analysis can be completed electronically if preferred, but teachers must always have easy access to view it (e.g. shared folder, link, or platform).
- This approach is not intended to replace existing marking or feedback practices, but to sit alongside them as a shared framework we can refer back to in lessons, feedback conversations, and assessment review.

### *Essay subjects and learning from mistakes*

Mistakes can still be categorised in the same way, but below are some more essay specific examples.

LFM Category	Essay Version
<b>Active mistake</b>	The plan is poorly made, meaning the question is never going to be answered well.
<b>Slip-up</b>	The correct plan is made but a mistake is made in how the essay is written
<b>Blackout</b>	The information needed to complete the essay is not known to the student

Students are advised to:

- Speak to your teachers to understand what errors you made
- Make notes on your essays during that conversation so you can refer back when completing your LFM sheet

– **Do it in green so it's easy to find**

Given the challenges associated with students understanding how to improve in essays, this approach has the potential to be more impactful for essays, because it ensures students engage with what specifically **needs to be done to improve**, not just a generic, I need to improve AO3.

### *How LFM Should Work in Coursework Subjects*

Coursework subjects (e.g. Art & Design, Media, BTEC subjects, and essay-based subjects with extended written work) often involve long-form tasks completed over time. Because the work isn't made up of short, discrete exam questions, the most common mistakes students make tend to be generic academic habits rather than content-specific misconceptions.

The purpose of LFM in coursework subjects is therefore to help students systematically identify and improve the *process* of producing high-quality work — focusing on clarity, accuracy, organisation, and meeting assessment criteria.

### *What LFM should target in coursework subjects*

Generic academic errors

These are common across coursework-heavy subjects and should be explicitly recognised by students:

- Spelling, punctuation and grammar errors
- Poor proofreading
- Misuse of paragraphing
- Not following academic writing conventions
- Not defining terms clearly
- Weak transitions between ideas

Not reading or following instructions carefully

This includes:

- Missing key components of the task
- Failing to meet word limits
- Incorrect file format or incomplete uploads
- Not addressing all parts of a brief or assessment criterion
- Forgetting required appendices, references or drafts

Not meeting subject-specific conventions

- Missing bibliography / incorrect referencing
- Inconsistent formatting
- Not labelling diagrams, images or evidence correctly
- Failure to link work back consistently to the mark scheme or criteria

Developing independence and professionalism

Coursework requires students to:

- Manage deadlines
- Plan and review drafts
- Organise their evidence
- Produce work that is polished, complete, and formally presented

LFM helps them build these habits.

<b>LFM Category</b>	<b>Coursework Version</b>
<b>Active mistake</b>	Misinterpreting the brief, misunderstanding how to structure the task, choosing an unsuitable method/approach
<b>Slip-up</b>	Careless errors in writing, forgetting to upload a section, inconsistent referencing, formatting mistakes
<b>Blackout</b>	Missing knowledge needed to complete the work confidently (e.g. not understanding a research method, lacking subject vocabulary)

*How students should implement LFM in coursework subjects*

Students complete LFM after each submitted draft, milestone, or marked section

They should analyse:

- What went wrong
- Why it happened
- What specific improvement is needed
- What action they will take **before the next deadline**

Teachers check quality — not do the analysis

As per the whole-Sixth-Form approach:

- Students lead the process
- Teachers check for superficial answers and challenge them
- Sheets should be kept at the back of folders / digitally

LFM becomes part of the drafting workflow

Examples:

- After teacher annotated comments on a Media or Art proposal
- After assessor feedback on BTEC evidence
- After an essay draft in History, Sociology or English

**Students should *never* move on to the next stage without completing LFM.**



# LEARNING FROM MISTAKES OVER TIME

1. Make mistakes

2. Embrace those mistakes

3. Identify, categorise and plan an improvement strategy for your mistakes using the LFM sheet

4. Set a realistic review date (less than a week)

DAY 0



5. Review (RAG) your improvement strategies

- a. Red - Requires significant additional work
- b. Amber - Progress made, but check again next week (e.g. embedding knowledge using flashcards)
- c. Green - Improvement completed

DAY 14



6. Review your review

7. Review your review of your review (until all is green)

DAY 21/28...



Student name: *David Flegg*

Assessment: *Exam 7*    Assessment date: *23rd November*    Analysis date: *5th December*    Review date: *17th December*

Question number	Marks (out of)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
3	0/3	Slip up	<i>I had the correct equation, but did not convert the units before starting</i>	<i>Repeat similar questions using practice for perfect model</i>	11/12	<i>Improving for next exam further. All complete exam more practice the week. Some practice completed using practice for perfect.</i>
6	2/6	Blatant	<i>I didn't know that I should use a ramp when trying to work out acceleration due to gravity in the correct phase.</i>	<i>Review all practice with sphere. AMO had thought the Physics practical to involve my teacher, has allowed to identify my gaps</i>	12/12	<i>Review all practice on sphere but there was a few that I'm still confused by. Spent in my classes to improve my knowledge.</i>
10	0/3	Action mistake	<i>I didn't read the question clearly, as answered in relation to the wrong component of the circuit. I have the information but didn't use it.</i>	<i>Answer the questions more in exam as I know exactly what they are asking. Answer the questions for all of my independent past paper questions and ask my teacher to check my answers</i>	9/12	<i>Practice reviewed my mistakes and they were mostly good. They gave me a few practice in exam practice and exam more practice to try, which I have now done.</i>

**Active Mistake**  
The wrong process is carried out

**Slip-Up**  
The correct process is chosen but errors in the execution of that process lead to a lower mark

**Blatant**  
The information needed to complete the challenge is either missing or forgotten

ANALYSIS SHEETS FOR ALL SUBJECTS SHOULD BE STORED IN THE BACK OF YOUR BOOKS

# THE BENEFITS OF LEARNING FROM MISTAKES SHEETS

## THEY IDENTIFY WEAKNESSES QUICKLY AND CLEARLY

- Spotting exactly what topics you struggle with
- Understanding why a mistake was made
- Pinpointing weaknesses in both content knowledge and revision method

## THEY GUIDE EFFECTIVE REVISION AND REVIEW IN THE FUTURE

- Roadmapping revision when you don't know what to revise next
- Personalised list of your most challenging topics or skills

## THEY HELP TURN WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS

- Strengthening previously weak topics
- Preventing repeating the same mistakes
- Improving long-term accuracy under pressure

## THEY BUILD METACOGNITION AND BETTER STUDY HABITS

- Reflecting on your thinking
- Becoming more aware of how and why mistakes happen
- Planning smarter, not just working harder

Student name: Jacob Foley

Assessment: *Exam 1* Assessment date: *23rd November* Analysis date: *5th December* Review date: *12th December*

Question number	Marks (out of 10)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
3	0/3	Slip up	I had the correct equation but did not convert the units before starting	Repeat similar questions using practice for perfect model	11/12	I improved, but could improve further. Will complete some more questions like work. Also questions completed using practice for perfect model
6	2/6	Blatant	I didn't know that I should use a ramp when trying to find the acceleration due to gravity in the context given.	Review all practice using questions AND look through the Physics practical to work out my teacher has showed to identify key parts	12/12	Remained all practice in questions but there are a few that I'm still confused by. Spent on my teacher to improve my knowledge
10	0/3	Active mistake	I didn't read the question clearly, so answered in relation to the wrong component in the circuit. I knew the information but didn't use it.	Annotate questions more in case as I know exactly what they are asking. Annotate the questions for all of my independent past paper questions and ask my teacher to check my annotations	9/12	Teacher reviewed my annotations and said they were generally good. They gave me a few pointers on some questions and gave more questions to do, which I have now done

## THEY SUPPORT IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENT AFTER EXAMS

- Learning quickly from recent mocks or past papers
- Closing gaps before the next assessment
- Improving exam techniques
- Allow you to take the learnings & move forward

## THEY MAKE FUTURE STRESS LOWER

- Avoiding last-minute panic because you always know your weaknesses
- They support in producing a final revision summary sheet on challenges you can use immediately before an exam



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# HOW TO USE LEARNING FROM MISTAKES SHEETS EFFECTIVELY

LEARN, REVIEW, IMPROVE

TO LEARN WELL, YOU MUST MAKE MISTAKES

Student name: *Jacob Foley*

Assessment: *Exam 1* Assessment date: *23rd November* Analysis date: *5th December* Review date: *12th December*

Question number	Marks (got/worth)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
3	0/3	Slip	<i>... but did not convert the ... starting</i>	<i>Repeat similar questions using 'practice for perfect' model</i>	11/12	<i>I improved, but could improve further. Will complete some more questions this week. More questions completed using 'practice for perfect'.</i>
6	2/6	Blackout	<i>I didn't know that I should use a ramp when trying to work out acceleration due to gravity in the context given.</i>	<i>Review all practicals using apearx AND look through the Physics practical 6 markers my teacher has shared to identify any gaps</i>	12/12	<i>Reviewed all practicals on apearx but there are a few that I'm still confused by. Speak to my teacher to improve my knowledge. 19/12. Speak to teacher and done ...</i>
10	0/3	Active mistake	<i>I didn't read the question clearly, so answered in relation to the wrong component in the circuit. I knew the information but didn't use it.</i>	<i>Annotate questions more in exams so I know exactly what they are asking. Annotate the questions for all of my independent past paper questions and ask my teacher to check my annotations</i>		

IDENTIFY

PLAN YOUR IMPROVEMENT

BE SPECIFIC ON YOUR MISTAKES

EVERY ERROR IS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

14b & C	0/2 1/2	Active mistake	<i>I forgot to apply my answer back to the stem of the question as it was quite a way further back in the paper</i>	<i>I need to always refer back to the stem in questions that need it. Ask my teacher for anything in the question I should be spotting to show it needs to be linked back to the stem.</i>	11/12	<i>Learn some key words that will help me identify when I should refer back to the stem and have added these to flashcards.</i>
3	15/20	Blackout	<i>I did not know enough examples of theories from different philosophers that I could have included. I should ensure I always remember: Kant (deontological ethics), Plato (Epistemology) and John Stuart Mill (utilitarianism)</i>	<i>Add Kant, Plato and Mill and when writing practice always include the philosopher's name and quote from, so I can check my work.</i>		<i>Have reviewed these flashcards regularly over the last week, need to continue them in my next review of flashcards. Essay plans need more work, I have struggled to find the time. Essay plans have improved over the last week and I got them checked by my teacher.</i>

REVIEW, REFLECT, REPEAT

YOU CONTROL YOUR LEARNING



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# STEM examples

Assessment: *Exam 1*

Assessment date: *23rd November*

Analysis date: *5th December*

Review date:

*12th December*

Question number	Marks (got/worth)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
3	0/3	Slip up	<i>I had the correct equation but did not convert the units before starting</i>	<i>Repeat similar questions using 'practice for perfect' model</i>	11/12	<i>I improved, but could improve further. Will complete some more questions this week. More questions completed using practice for perfect.</i>
6	2/6	Blackout	<i>I didn't know that I should use a ramp when trying to work out acceleration due to gravity in the context given.</i>	<i>Review all practicals using ulearn AND look through the Physics practical 6 markers my teacher has shared to identify any gaps</i>	12/12	<i>Reviewed all practicals on ulearn but there are a few that I'm still confused by. Speak to my teacher to improve my knowledge. 19/12 Spoken to teacher and done some extra questions they set.</i>
10	0/3	Active mistake	<i>I didn't read the question clearly, so answered in relation to the wrong component in the circuit. I knew the information but didn't use it.</i>	<i>Annotate questions more in exams so I know exactly what they are asking. Annotate the questions for all of my independent past paper questions and ask my teacher to check my annotations</i>	9/12	<i>Teacher reviewed my annotations and said they were generally good. They gave me a few pointers on some questions and some more questions to try, which I have now done.</i>

Question number	Marks (got/worth)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
14b & c	0/2 1/2	Active mistake	I forgot to apply my answer back to the stem of the question as it was quite a way further back in the paper	I need to always refer back to the stem in questions that need it.  Ask my teacher for anything in the question I should be spotting to show it needs to be linked back to the stem.	11/12	Learnt some key words that will help me identify when I should refer back to the stem and have added these to flashcards.
3	15/20	Blackout	I did not know enough examples of theories from different philosophers that I could have included. I should ensure I always remember: Kant (deontological ethics), Plato (Epistemology) and John Stuart Mill (utilitarianism)	Add Kant, Plato and Mill to flashcards and when writing practice plans for essays always include the philosophers I will quote from, so I can check I know them.	12/12	Have reviewed these flashcards regularly over the last week, need to continue them in my review of flashcards. Essay plans need more work, I have struggled to find the time. Essay plans have improved over the last week and I got them checked by my teacher

## Essay exam subject examples

# Coursework and

# vocational examples

Student name: *Jacob Foley*

Assessment: *Exam 1*    Assessment date: *23rd November*    Analysis date: *5th December*    Review date: *12th December*

Question number	Marks (got/worth)	Error type	Specifics (e.g. nature of approach done wrong, nature of slip up, knowledge missing)	Improvement strategy	Review date	Review outcome
<i>Section A</i>	<i>Merit, need to aim for distinction</i>	<i>Slip up</i>	<i>Did not proofread my work I ended up with too many sentences that didn't fully make sense</i>	<i>Read through my work out loud before submitting it. If that doesn't work I can ask a friend or teacher to read it for me</i>	<i>11/12</i>	<i>I did ok reading it myself, but didn't get a friend to help, I still made some mistakes. I got a friend to help this time and they picked up a few extra mistakes,</i>
<i>Section B</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Active mistake</i>	<i>I forgot to include a key section of the work (part 2) when submitting and lost it.</i>	<i>Always save work clearly, with the title of the activity and <u>in my one drive.</u></i>	<i>12/12</i>	<i>Checked back through my most recent task before submission and it was all there. I am now naming and organising bits correctly</i>
<i>Component 2</i>	<i>5/8</i>	<i>Active mistake</i>	<i>I focused too much on learning about 2 artists when I needed to use the time to look at three artists</i>	<i>Check with the teacher if I am unsure of the instructions</i>		<i>I checked with the teacher and have got all the parts of work done since.  It's also made the lessons much nicer as I'm confident in what I need to be doing.</i>

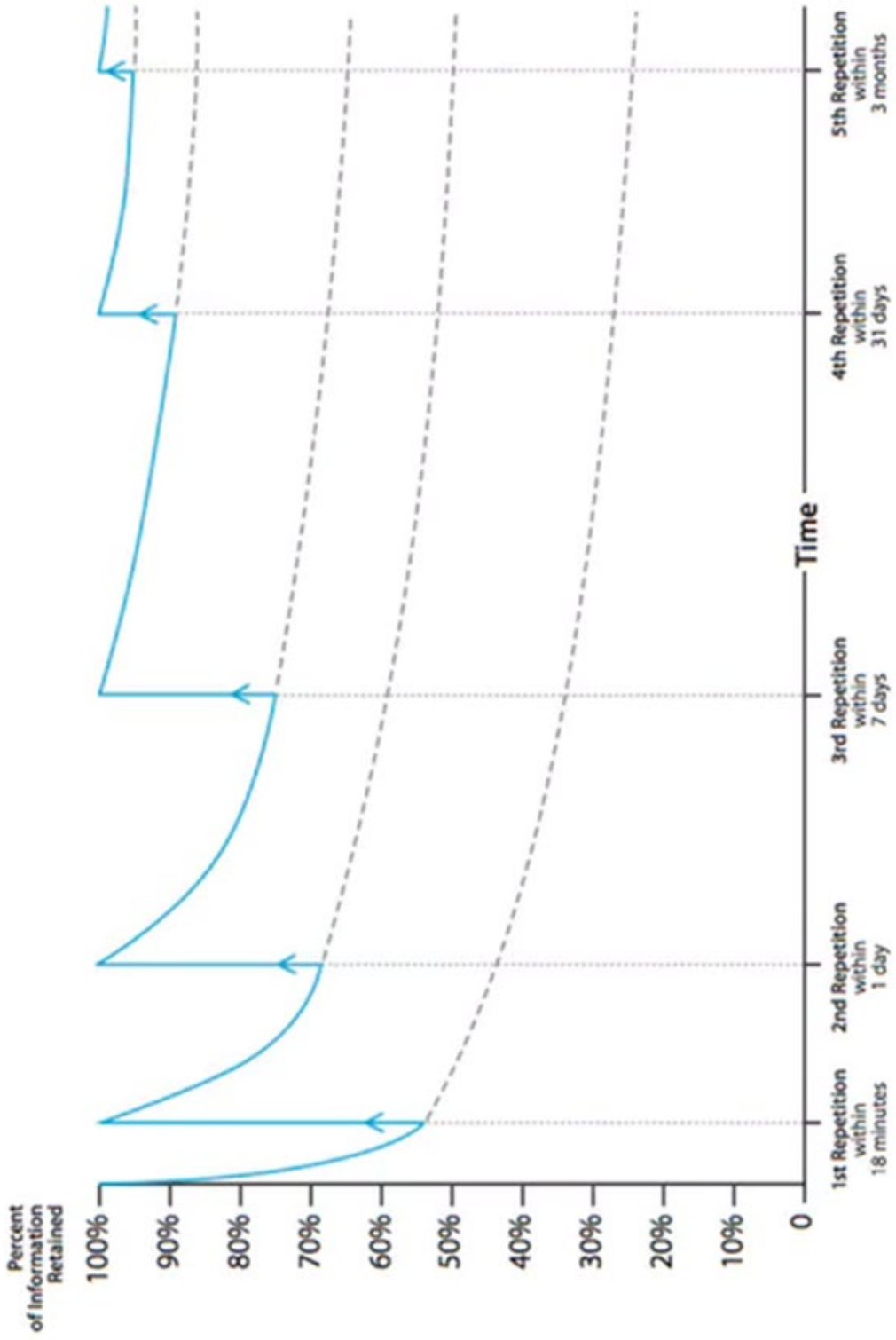
## Study Tools & Techniques

### Why Study?

- We can hold 5-7 items at one time in our Short Term Memory
- Long Term Memory is where information is stored and can be retrieved as required
- The more items stored in our Long Term Memory, the more space is created in our Short Term Memory for new information
- Therefore, constant revision and recap outside of the classroom is vital for exam preparation

<b>CORNELL NOTES</b>	
	- Key words and ideas
	- Important dates/people/places
- Main Idea	- Repeated or stressed info
- Key Question <small>(after notes are completed)</small>	- Ideas or brainstorming written on the board or projector
	- Info from textbook or stories
	- Diagrams and pictures
	- Formulas
<hr/>	
Summary of your notes in your own words	

# Rate of Forgetting with Study/Repetition



## Revision Strategies – Examples

- Flash Cards and Post Its for key words, definitions, fact etc
- Highlighting and Annotating Text Books or Revision Guides
- Question-Answer Cards
- Posters
- Pre-seen PPEs or Mocks
- Timed Exam Papers
- Cornell Note Taking Method
- Knowledge Organiser

## Exam Technique

- Do **not assume** that you are being asked a particular question that you have studied in class
- **Dissect** the question carefully by underlining or circling key concepts
- **Highlight** the key words
- **Re-read** the question
- **Prepare for** and find out about common errors that students make in exams

## Ten exam mistakes that lose us easy marks

1. Not reading the question properly
2. Writing the essay you want to write, not the one you've been set
3. Not writing an essay plan
4. Leaving the easiest questions until last
5. Running out of time
6. Trying to write a full essay when you are running out of time
7. Leaving any questions blank
8. Leaving the exam room early (e.g. not using the full allocated time available)
9. Poor spelling and grammar
10. Not enough sleep

## Top Tips for the Exam Period

- Ask for help especially when in doubt
- Exam Day “Cheat Sheet”
- Drink plenty of water
- Change location/venue of revision from time to time
- Exercise and get fresh air/take short breaks
- Teach each other
- Eat healthily to feed your brain
- Stick to school routines – be awake during the normal exam times

# Work Experience and Post-18 Support

## Applications Advisors – Post 18 plans

Application advisors are teachers with experience of supporting students through applications to a variety of post-18 destinations. They are assigned based on availability for regular sessions with students and have responsibility for a number of different ongoing levels of support. Applications Advisors' start working with students towards the end of year 12 and work with them in year 13 until they have secured a suitable post-18 opportunity or opportunities.

### *Individualised Application Support*

- Provide personalised guidance for each student applying to university, apprenticeships, and employment.
- Work with students regularly from late Year 12 through Year 13 to ensure consistent progress.
- Maintain structured, purposeful meetings, often weekly, to monitor application readiness.

### *UCAS, Apprenticeship & Job Application Guidance*

- Support students in exploring and selecting appropriate post-18 pathways based on interests, strengths, and aspirations.
- Guide students through every stage of the UCAS process, including course selection, deadlines, and submission requirements.
- Provide targeted support for apprenticeship and job applications, including searching for roles, completing forms, and preparing for interviews.

### *Personal Statements & References*

- Offer detailed, one-to-one feedback on personal statements to ensure clarity, structure, and impact.
- Work closely with mentors and the sixth form team to produce accurate, supportive references.
- Ensure all written materials meet high standards and reflect students' achievements and ambitions.

### *Progress Tracking & Accountability*

- Monitor student progress against key deadlines and maintain accurate records of meetings and actions.
- Support students in staying organised and meeting all internal and external submission dates.
- Escalate concerns or delays to the sixth form team when necessary.

### *Communication & Coordination*

- Liaise regularly with mentors, the sixth form leadership team, and external partners to ensure cohesive post-18 support.
- Provide updates on student progress and highlight any required interventions.
- Help connect students with opportunities such as open days, work experience, and outreach programmes.

## Work Experience

Students are supported to get work experience, with all students expected to undertake either remote or in person work experience prior to the start of year 12. Work experience is a core part of the Bacon's College Sixth Form entitlement. Every student is expected to complete meaningful work experience before the start of Year

13, either in person or remote. These placements help students begin their career journey, build confidence, and gain real insight into professional environments.

### *Why we do it*

Work experience is a key part of preparing students for life after Sixth Form. Work experience also reinforces our commitment to **education with character**, helping students build independence, communication skills, resilience, and future readiness.

It supports our wider aim of ensuring all students leave Bacon's with:

- Real understanding of potential career paths
- Increased self-belief and employability skills
- First-hand experience of workplace expectations
- Insight that strengthens UCAS, apprenticeship, and job applications
- Connections with employers and industry professionals

### *Types of Work Experience*

We recognise **three formats** of work experience. Only two of these meet Bacon's College expectations.

#### *In-Person Work Experience (Accepted)*

In-person placements take place **on-site at an employer's workplace**. Students travel to the location and experience the routines, expectations, and culture of a real working environment.

This format provides opportunities to observe professionals, interact with teams, and engage fully with workplace tasks and expectations

#### *Remote Work Experience (Accepted)*

Remote work experience is live, supervised, and interactive, delivered via platforms such as Google Classroom or Google Meet. Students join scheduled sessions, complete guided tasks, work with industry mentors, and participate in discussions or Q&A sessions.

It mirrors real "work-from-home" professional environments and helps students develop digital collaboration and communication skills.

#### *Virtual Work Experience (Not Accepted as Sufficient on Its Own)*

Virtual experience refers to pre-recorded videos, self-paced tasks, or non-interactive modules.

While useful as background learning, it does not give students authentic, real-time engagement with professionals.

For this reason, virtual experiences do not count as stand-alone work experience at Bacon's College. Students may use them to prepare, but must still complete in-person or remote work experience.

### *How Students Are Supported*

All students receive structured guidance to help secure and complete work experience. See staff and support provided below.

#### *Sixth Form Team Guidance*

- Explaining expectations in pastoral sessions
- Helping students use tools such as Unifrog and the Work Experience Finder
- Preparing students to approach employers professionally
- Supporting reflection on experiences as part of personal development

#### *Careers Advisor Support*

- Exploring suitable industries or pathways
- Finding and applying for placements
- Using platforms such as Futures For All

- Receiving targeted support if struggling to secure a placement

#### Application Advisors

- Ensuring work experience strengthens UCAS/apprenticeship/job applications
- Supporting with CVs, employer emails, and application forms
- Preparing students for interviews, Insight Days, and placement expectations

#### Online platform support, e.g. Futures For All Opportunities

There are a variety of platforms available for finding work experience, and it can also be sought directly from employers. As a Sixth Form we suggest all students start by using the Futures For All platform as this contains all of the below.

- Access to multi-day placements with major UK employers
- Industry-led remote work experience projects
- Insight Days and career talks
- Fully funded opportunities designed for state school students

#### *What Students Can Expect to Gain*

- Real insight into professional workplaces
- Stronger CVs, UCAS statements, and interview performances
- Improved independence, organisation, and responsibility
- Clearer long-term ambitions and career direction
- Meaningful experiences that support post-18 decision making

## Post-18 Pathways

### **Higher education level course**

This can be either full-time, part-time or by distance learning, at a university or a college. There are lots of benefits of higher education, here are some examples:

#### **Employment benefits**

- The skills you can gain from a higher education course can give you an edge in the job market and help you progress in your career. Employers are often looking for people with graduate level skills - irrespective of the degree subject studied.
- People with higher level skills are less likely to be unemployed, partly because their higher-level skills allow them to do a range of jobs. And with new jobs being developed all the time, a higher level qualification will put you in a stronger position. By 2024, around 54% of people in employment are expected to be qualified to at least Level 4. For more details see this report.
- Many professional jobs require a university degree - architecture, dentistry, physiotherapy and lots more.
- Many professions only employ graduates and many of the opportunities they offer can be open to graduates with any degree subject.
- Even if you have no career in mind you can, through a degree, develop skills employers want such as team working, communication skills, research skills.
- Many universities will give students the opportunity to do work experience, either in this country or abroad, which will add to your CV.
- You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can really help with your future career.

#### **Financial benefits**

- Of course there is debate about the figures, and they can vary widely between surveys, but on average graduates in the workforce earn £10,000 more a year compared to non-graduates.
- Employers pay most for skills and qualifications that are specialised and are particularly important to their business or are in short supply.
- In 2017, graduates and postgraduates had higher employment rates, with a greater proportion in high-skilled employment.
- An Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report shows "Higher education leads to much better earnings than those earned by non-graduates, although students need to realise that their subject choice is important in determining how much of an earnings advantage they will have." [Read more here](#)
- The same report found that women benefit more from a degree than their male counterparts. Median earnings of English women around 10 years after graduation were just over three times those of non-graduates, compared to the median earnings of male graduates, which were around twice those of men without a degree

### **Personal benefits**

- Graduates enjoy better health outcomes by being less likely to smoke, more likely to exercise, and less prone to depression.
- Graduates' children also benefit from the educational success of their parents: graduates tend to have a greater involvement with their child's education.
- Graduates are more influential in the community by being active citizens who are more likely to vote and participate in voluntary activities.
- Graduates show positive attitudes towards diversity and equal opportunities, such as on race and gender equality issues.
- Graduates, with their higher levels of skill, are a source of wider innovation and economic growth

## Advanced, Higher or Degree Apprenticeship

If you are doing A Levels or other Level 3 qualifications, like BTECs/OCRs, you might be considering an apprenticeship or higher education (university) when you finish.

An apprenticeship can be a good route if you want to get training for a specific job sector and be earning at the same time. There are all sorts of opportunities for fantastic apprenticeships developing all the time.

However, there are a few things you need to consider:

- Apprenticeship vacancies for the summer after you finish your A Levels/other Level 3 qualifications are advertised throughout the year and the closing dates can vary. Therefore, if you are undecided about whether to choose an apprenticeship or higher-education path it is probably best to apply for higher education as well as look for apprenticeship vacancies. If you get an apprenticeship you can always decline your university offer.
- There are 70+ different job areas now offering Higher Apprenticeships, which are higher-education-level qualifications (Level 4+). Employers are asking for A Levels and other Level 3 qualifications as entry requirements. Search for vacancies online using the [Careerpilot course search](#) or register for alerts about vacancies on [gov.uk](#). You can also look at company websites or make speculative applications.
- If you do not have the relevant job-specific experience you might have to complete an Advanced Apprenticeship, even though these are the same level qualifications (Level 3) as A Levels - although you might be able to complete it quicker than a 16-year-old.
- Not all sectors offer Higher Apprenticeship qualifications so make sure you check if they are available in your chosen sector. [Look here to find out what apprenticeships are approved](#) but remember, you still need to find a vacancy.
- For some jobs there is no apprenticeship pathway and a university degree is the only way in e.g. vet, doctor, etc.
- Higher and Degree Apprenticeship opportunities are likely to be highly competitive!

### Other Options:

- Internships and Work Placements (a job that offers training)
- Doing a vocational course at a Further Education College

## Russel Group Universities

### What are Russell Group Universities?

The Russell Group is a catch-all term for a group of universities with a shared focus on research and a reputation for academic achievement. These universities are usually found near the top of the league tables. There are currently 24 universities belonging to the Russell Group:

- University of Birmingham
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- Cardiff University
- Durham University
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Exeter
- University of Glasgow
- Imperial College London
- King's College London
- University of Leeds
- University of Liverpool
- London School of Economics & Political Science
- University of Manchester
- Newcastle University
- University of Nottingham
- University of Oxford
- Queen Mary, University of London
- Queen's University Belfast
- University of Sheffield
- University of Southampton
- University College London
- University of Warwick
- University of York

## 10 Things to look for When Choosing your University Course

So you've decided on a subject to study at university, but there are so many courses to choose from – how do you pick just five for your UCAS form?

### 1. Entry requirements

Match the course entry requirements to your predicted grades to ensure you're making realistic choices, based on what you're likely to achieve – plus a back-up option in case you don't quite get the grades you're predicted.

**Why it's useful:** according to UCAS, 42% of applicants hold an insurance choice with conditions which are harder or equal to the conditions for their first choice. This means that if you miss your grades, you won't have an offer to fall back on.

### 2. Type of university

Universities are clustered into groups, such as the Russell Group. These groups tell you something about the overarching ambitions of the university, but there are also much more obvious cultural differences between institutions that may sway your decision. Some universities may have a particularly active political scene or reputation for sport, for instance, while others may have a really strong student union offering lots of societies and nightlife options.

**Why it's useful:** you could be spending three or four years at this university. It's about finding the best fit for you, based on your interests and values.

### 3. Location

Universities and colleges offering degrees differ hugely – from self-contained campuses where you can study, rest and play to urban settings where you're slap bang in the middle of the hustle and bustle of a city and have to travel in to lectures.

You should also think about your location right now. Do you plan to live at home and commute or have you set your search radius 50, 100 or 200+ miles away? What will the travelling be like and how much will it cost?

**Why it's useful:** if you're looking for buzzing nightlife and end up on a sleepy self-contained campus (or vice versa), you may not get the experience you're looking for. Go to an open day to get a feel for where you could be located.

### 4. Student satisfaction scores

All final-year students are asked to rate their course and university experience in the National Student Survey. The findings are often quoted as an overall satisfaction score but you can also find specific ratings such as teaching, feedback from staff and facilities.

**Why it's useful:** it can give you a glimpse into what students on the ground think about the course.

### 5. How you'll spend your time

Will you have a very structured timetable with lectures, seminars or practical work – or will you be expected to work independently in the library? What about placement year opportunities? Teaching hours will vary depending on the subject you're applying for. For example there will probably be fewer timetabled hours on a history course than an engineering one, but you'll be expected to study 'self-guided' the rest of the time.

**Why it's useful:** comparing teaching hours between similar courses at different universities should help you to find the best fit for you.

## 6. Course content

Don't skim read this! Look through the course information offered by the university and ask yourself if you can happily spend the next few years of your life committed to this course. Similar-sounding courses can actually end up covering very different areas, so reading the course content for each is a good point of comparison. There will be core subjects that you have to do and optional subjects that you have a choice over – how flexible are these? Can you find lots of modules that sound appealing?

**Why it's useful:** If you don't like the course content, you will not like the course. If you do not like the course content you face a very high chance of dropping out – do your research!

## 7. How you'll be assessed

Your degree could be assessed in lots of different ways – coursework, exams, practicals, presentations and group work. When comparing courses, take a look in detail at this to try and find the course that best plays to your academic strengths.

**Why it's useful:** if your courses up until now have had a specific leaning towards one method of assessment – BTEC Nationals often have a high coursework element to them, for instance - you may face a steep learning curve if you choose a course that heavily leans another way.

## 8. Graduate prospects

Find out what students are up to after they graduate from studying a subject at a particular university – including the percentage who are now in work or further study, the types of professions they're working in and how much they're earning. Some comparisons even show average salary information over a longer period (one, three and five years after graduating).

**Why it's useful:** some fields require you to get some experience under your belt before you see a bump up in salary (so don't be put off if the initial graduate salary for a subject is low). A good example is performing arts, where spots are competitive and you need to work your way up before you see a difference in your pay.

## 9. Professional accreditation

For certain subjects, such as acting or psychology, choosing a course that's been accredited by a relevant body will ensure you're 'work-ready' or able to progress straight into the appropriate postgraduate course – this will give you a headstart when it comes to getting into a specific profession.

**Why it's useful:** you don't want to end up on a course which could make it more difficult to achieve your career goals, after three or more years.

## 10. Competition

When you're looking at courses compare how many applicants received an offer for the course last year. A lower number can indicate that it's a competitive course to get on to. Your application will be judged on its individual merit, of course – so even a high percentage of offers per applicant doesn't guarantee that you'll get one, and vice versa.

**Why it's useful:** it's a useful measure to look at for each of your five UCAS course choices – if all of your courses have a significantly low number of applicants receiving offers, you may want to balance out your options with at least one course choice offering higher chances.